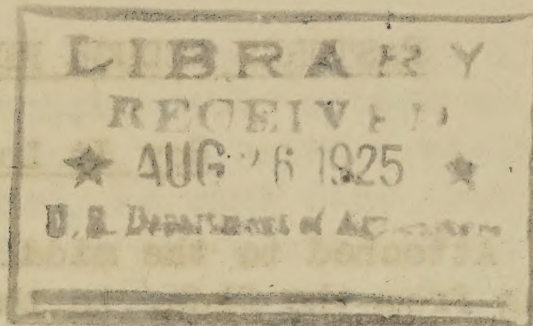


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Service

Office of Exhibits

A Summary of the Exhibit

PASTURES REDUCE FEEDING COSTS

A booth exhibit showing the relation of good pastures to cost of feeding dairy cows.

Specifications

Floor space - - - - - 13 ft. front, 8 ft.
Wall space - - - - - None (deep.
Shipping weight - - - - - 550 lbs.
Electrical requirements - None

PASTURES REDUCE FEEDING COSTS

How It Looks

Attached to the middle of the center section and running from the floor to the middle of the section are noticed two tall symbol graphs. The right hand column is made up of 13 much enlarged dollar-sign disks. The lefthand graph shows the percentage of different kinds of feed given to dairy cows. The foundation of this graph is a small imitation silo. On top of this are five layers of minature sacks of grain. On top of the grain are four tiers of baled hay, and on top of the hay is material which represents pasture grasses.

By comparing the two columns one can readily see the cost and percentage of the different kinds of feeds given to the dairy cow during the year.

The left section represents figures on the value and cost of pasture in seven States in various parts of the country. The right section shows, by text, important information regarding the care of pastures.

The booth is 13 feet across the front, 8 feet deep and 7 feet high.

What It Tells

It pays to improve pastures because they furnish nearly one-third of the feed of dairy cattle at one-seventh of the total feed cost. In other words, pasturage costs less than one-half as much as other feeds. This is the story told in the exhibit. These data were obtained from studies conducted in seven States, viz., North Carolina, Indiana, Vermont, Washington, Nebraska, Louisiana, and Delaware.

The percent of total feed cost ranged from 6.2 in North Carolina to 22.4 in Washington, and averaged 14.1 for the seven states. The percent of total feed furnished by pasture ranged from 13.5 in Louisiana to 40.5 in Delaware, and averaged 29.6 for the seven States.

It is also brought out that the quantity of feed from pastures depends to a considerable extent on how the dairyman handles his pasture. A pasture which is properly fertilized or manured, is kept free from weeds, and receives intelligent care in the matter of pasture practices, will furnish a great deal more pasturage than a neglected, improperly grazed pasture.

Cattle should not be turned into a pasture in the spring until the grass is three or four inches high and has a good start. Then, enough cattle should be turned on to graze off the pasture evenly and rapidly enough to prevent the grasses from sending up seed stems.

In some sections from the latter part of July thru August and part of September, pastures do not furnish as much feed as during May and June. When the pasture begins to get short in hot weather supplementary feeds such as silage, soiling crops, or other feeds should be provided until the fall rains and cooler weather start the grass to growing again in the fall.

Keeping the pasture grazed down evenly prevents it from becoming coarse in texture and often allows grasses such as blue grass, redtop and white clover, etc., to come in. Keeping the tame grasses down also helps to keep the protein content at a higher point which is so necessary for producing milk.

Another good method of pasture management is to have two pastures which are grazed alternately. By this method cows will at one time eat more of the less palatable grasses and keep the grass grazed off more evenly than they will when they are in a large pasture where they can select the tenderest grasses, and avoid other less palatable grasses.

Where To Get Information.

The following bulletins may be obtained free of charge from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

Farmers' Bulletin 339 Alfalfa

Farmers' Bulletin 797 Sweet Clover, Growing the Crop

Farmers' Bulletin 814 Bermuda Grass.

Farmers' Bulletin 1125 Forage for the Cotton Belt.

It is also brought out that the quantity of food from pastures depends to a considerable extent on how the dairyman handles his pasture. A pasture which is properly fertilized or manured, is kept free from weeds, and receives intelligent care in the matter of pasturing practices, will furnish a great deal more pasture than a neglected, improperly grazed pasture.

Cattle should not be turned into a pasture in the spring until the grass is three or four inches high and has a good start. Then, enough cattle should be turned on to graze off the pasture evenly and rapidly enough to prevent the grass from becoming uprooted.

In some sections from the latter part of July through August and part of September, pastures do not furnish as much food as during May and June. When the pasture begins to get short in hot weather, supplementary food such as silage, cutting crops, or other food should be provided until the fall rains and cooler weather start the grass to growing again in the fall.

Keeping the pasture grazed down evenly prevents it from becoming coarse in texture and often allows grasses such as blue grass, red-top and white clover, etc., to come in. Keeping the same grasses down also helps to keep the protein content at a high point which is so necessary for producing milk.

Another good method of pasture management is to have two pastures which are grazed alternately by the method cows will at one time eat more of the less palatable grasses and keep the grass grazed off more evenly than they will when they are in a large pasture where they can select the tenderest grasses, and avoid the less palatable grasses.

Where to Get Information

The following bulletins may be obtained free of charge from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D.C.

Farmer's Bulletin 1125	Forage for the Cotton Belt
Farmer's Bulletin 814	Bermuda Grass
Farmer's Bulletin 797	Sweet Clover, Growing the
Farmer's Bulletin 739	Alfalfa